

3. Should universities have special policies to admit students with disabilities? If so, what scores or evaluation evidence should be allowed and what should not be allowed?
4. What other intervention or technique could have been used to help Donald improve his reading?
5. To help Donald transition from home to college, what could his parents and teachers do?
6. What could universities do to assist persons with disabilities? What accommodations should college or university professors do or allow to assist college students with disabilities?
7. When considering the differences between what society views as normal and persons with disabilities, how do these views translate into actions? (For example, how would you have treated Donald in his classes before he was diagnosed?)
8. *Activity:* Visit the websites of the National Association of State Directors of Special Education and find out what special services they provide for students with learning disabilities. Compare different responses and discuss how they would affect the college or university environment you would recommend for a college student with LD interested in attending one of these postsecondary schools.



12. TOBY

Issues: Educational Goals/Objectives, Instructional Methods/Techniques

Toby was always a kid in motion. Diagnosed with learning disabilities and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder finally put a label on his problems. He is a smart child, yet his disabilities prevent him from reaching his potential.

Toby was always an active child, overactive to be precise. When he was born, his mother, Luisa, tells the story that she knew from the beginning that he was different. She remembers that while she was still in the hospital recovering from her delivery, she could tell when Toby was being brought from the nursery to her room. She could always distinguish his cry from the other babies because Toby had a high shrieking cry that could be heard throughout the hospital floor. Whenever she heard the cry, she knew Toby was on his way. When nestled in her arms, he was always in constant motion and she could never quite comfort him. From his first days, Luisa and Jose, Toby's father, knew that he was no ordinary child.

Toby's preschool years were turbulent. His teachers recall how he was "always in motion" and caused havoc particularly in group activities. In one incident, when he was 4 years old, he wanted a toy truck from the top of an

eight-foot high book stand. After repeatedly being told "no" by his teacher, Toby decided to take matters into his own hands by climbing up the shelves to the top of the book stand. As he neared the top, he reached for the truck. Suddenly the book stand gave way and tumbled him and all of the contents onto the floor. Fortunately he managed to walk away from the incident with only a bruise. At the teacher's request, Toby was quickly removed from her class and never returned. As Toby moved to another preschool class, his impulsivity and hyperactivity became worse and his academic and behavioral problems continued.

Throughout much of his early education, Toby had great difficulty learning even the most basic skills such as identifying the letters in his name and the numbers to ten. His teachers always knew that Toby was intelligent, yet realized that he was not learning at the same rate as the other children. As they watched him complete children's puzzles, they were amazed with his speed and accuracy at correctly matching the pieces. But when it came to learning tasks, particularly reading tasks, he had a lot of difficulty focusing on the task. Many of the learning activities ended with Toby laying his head on the desk because he was too tired and frustrated to finish. Though he was always eager to try new tasks, he would quickly lose interest and become distracted.

It was early in third grade that his teacher, Mrs. McDonald, noticed that Toby's reading problems were serious enough to warrant a closer look. In one incident, she requested that her students work at their desks as they completed a worksheet. This particular worksheet involved having the children find the missing word in the sentences (fill-in-the-blank). As she watched Toby at his desk, she saw that he quickly began to work on his assignment. He worked diligently—head down, eyes on paper, writing responses for each question. Two minutes later she again scanned the room and saw all of the other children working on the worksheet with the exception of Toby. Toby was sitting at his desk spinning his pencil around in circles and chuckling in delight. Sensing that something was wrong, Mrs. McDonald approached his desk to find that Toby had completed the worksheet, but he had answered all of the items incorrectly. As she sat working with Toby, she soon found that he was unable to identify certain diphthongs and blends in some of the words. Over the next few weeks she also noticed that Toby exhibited other reading problems, such as frequent reversals (saw for was, when for then, and b for d), frequent confusion of the vowel sound (i for e), and numerous sight word errors (his for this, the for they, and this for that). Mrs. McDonald also reported that even when Toby sounded out each letter to a word, he would often say a completely different word than the word in front of him. (For b-l-a-c-k, Toby was able to pronounce the letter sounds but then pronounced the word as game.)

During many of his reading tasks, Mrs. McDonald noticed that on some days Toby would do well, yet on others he would do poorly. She knew he took medication to control his inattentiveness; she suspected that his inconsistent performance might have something to do with how often he took his medication. The more she looked back at his grades, the more she saw that his test and quiz scores reflected this inconsistent pattern, one day high and the next day low.

His hyperactive behavior and small size made him an easy target for other students' abuse. They often ridiculed him about black-rimmed glasses ("four eyes"); his small size ("shrimp"); and his overactive, fidgety behavior ("weirdo").

Because Toby was a new student in her class, it took Mrs. McDonald several weeks before she could document these problems and bring them to the attention of the school principal. Before referring the student to the school psychologist, the principal suggested that Mrs. McDonald try several pre-referral interventions with Toby and that she document his progress while she used these techniques. If after one month of using these techniques Toby continued to exhibit learning and behavioral difficulties, then he would be recommended for a full psychological evaluation.

During the next month, Mrs. McDonald tried three different techniques during Toby's reading class. The first technique that she tried was to have him review missed words from the previous day's story before reading a new story. When she tried this technique for one week, she found that Toby still missed many words, at least twenty words in a 500-word reading passage. The next week, prior to him reading a new story, she had Toby practice saying words that he missed from the previous story and she also had Toby practice fifteen new sight words taken from the new story. At the end of the week, she again examined her charts and found that Toby had reduced his number of errors but still had eight errors per story. Finally during the third week, she decided to add a repeated reading procedure to further reduce the number of reading errors. After evaluating Toby's oral reading scores, she found that Toby reduced his error rate to five words per story. Mrs. McDonald was proud of Toby's performance, however, she knew that in his other classes those teachers would not be using these techniques. She also realized that Toby still had numerous other learning problems, particularly in the area of written language. Because of her concerns, she decided to refer Toby to the school psychologist for further evaluation.

The psychologist, Mr. Zambie, found that Toby performed above average on the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children—Revised (WISC-R), but performed poorly on the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) subtests of reading and spelling and performed poorly on the Broad Reading and Broad Written Language subtests of the Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery (WJPB).

The following table summarizes Toby's scores:

WISC-R Scores

Verbal IQ = 108

Performance IQ = 128

Full scale IQ = 119

WRAT Scores

Reading standard score = 77/grade equivalent score = 1.6

Spelling standard score = 67/grade equivalent score = 1.8

Arithmetic standard score = 90/grade equivalent score = 3.1

WJPB

Broad reading standard score = 94/percentile rank = 34

Broad mathematics standard score = 112/percentile rank = 78

Broad written language standard score = 86/percentile rank = 17

Broad knowledge standard score = 104/percentile rank = 61

To further assess Toby's reading, Mrs. McDonald followed up with the Hudson Education Skills Inventory-Reading (HESI-R). The results from the HESI-R confirmed her suspicions of Toby's deficits by showing Toby's poor performance in the areas of phonic analysis, structural analysis, and comprehension. More specifically, the HESI-R yielded nonmastery in the skill areas of r-controlled sounds (ar, ir, er), diphthongs (oi, oy, ou, ow), word endings (es, ing, ed), and silent consonants (kn, mb, gn, wr, ght, tch). Toby's reading comprehension results from the Silvaroli Classroom Reading Inventory indicated that his independent reading level (reading comprehension) was at the first grade level, his instruction level (reading comprehension) was at the second-grade reading level, and his listening comprehension was at the fourth-grade level.

Upon examining the results from the battery of tests that had been administered to Toby, Mrs. McDonald remarked to the third grade LD teacher, Mrs. Ridge, that she was finally getting rid of him from her classroom and that she should make room in her classroom for the kid. When Mrs. Ridge commented back that she was looking forward to working with Mrs. McDonald and Toby to help resolve many of his reading deficits, Mrs. McDonald remarked that she has done all that she can and she was hoping that Toby would be in Mrs. Ridge's class full time.

QUESTIONS

1. What was the purpose of the prereferral interventions that were used? Did they help Toby?
2. Can you think of any other prereferral interventions that could have been used?
3. In what type of placement do you think Toby should be placed and why?
4. How do you think Mrs. McDonald feels about placing Toby in the LD classroom?
5. If Toby is placed in Mrs. Ridge's classroom, what could she do to create a collaborative environment with Mrs. McDonald or with other regular education teachers?
6. If Toby goes to Mrs. Ridge's class, what could be done to help Toby transition from his regular education class to her class? How should the teacher handle telling the other students about his disability?
7. Using the information from the case, develop one goal and two short-term objectives for Toby.